

UNCLASSIFIED

6/24/76

Int'l Reaction

SOC 14

CONTROL: 4160
24 JUN 76 1320DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TELEGRAMINDICATE
☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

DDO20

FROM AmEmbassy BUENOS AIRES CLASSIFICATION [REDACTED]

O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, IS, AR
SUBJECT: Israeli View of Human Rights and Anti-Semitism in Argentina

ACTION: SecState WASHDC

Info: AmEmbassy TEL AVIV

Ref: [REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 4160
Buenos Aires 3741, Buenos Aires 3851AMB
POL-3
POL/R
ECOM
USIS
USDAO
MILGP-2
LEGAT
SCIAT
RF
CHRON

1. Israeli Embassy assessment of GOA position on human rights in general and on anti-Semitism in particular was given to Emboff June 16 by senior Israeli diplomat.

2. Source stated that his Embassy had concluded from information available to it that human rights abuses such as kidnappings and killings of leftists and of foreign exiles living in Argentina are result of policy decision by GOA, and not of lack of control of security elements. According to reports which have reached Israelis, and which they consider convincing, Argentine military made basic decision well before coup of March 24 to eliminate subversion and terrorism, and to silence and terrorize all significant potential opposition. Only question remaining was how to do so with least exposure to external criticism which had isolated military regime in

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S20000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/FIS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
Release () Excise () Deny
Exemption(s):
Classify: () In Part (X) In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

AFTED BY: POL:RSSSteven:mg DRAFTING DATE 6/23/76 TEL. EXT. 121 CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: POL:WSSmith WBS

REFERENCES:

DAO: ColPACoughlin
OL/R: DSmock

AMB: RChill

A/DCM: WBeal

UNCLASSIFIED

80F178
22/185

CLASSIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED

Chile.

3. One group in military were understood to have urged "Pinochet" course, meaning mass roundups of suspects, large internment camps, and executions with or without formality of summary courts-martial. This course assumed that GOA would accept responsibility for actions and would argue internal security crises as justification.
4. Alternative course, which was adopted by new GOA, according to this assessment, was labeled "la basural" - in rough translation, the "trash disposal" method. Under this course, GOA gave green light to security forces to attack internal security problem with any methods considered appropriate, but always keeping GOA in position of what amounts to "plausible denial" of responsibility. Effort was to cast smokescreen of doubt for first few weeks or months while opposition being destroyed. According to this assessment, GOA accepted fact that it would be suspect and that moderate opinion would eventually begin to turn against it. At point where destruction of internal opposition no longer outweighed increasing domestic and international criticism, GOA would finally find itself able to bring abuses of "unauthorized security elements" and "rightist extremists" under control.
5. Sophisticated touch, according to stories reaching source, was cultivation of false idea that Pres. Videla and "moderates" were battling valiantly against certain "hardliners" and thus

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

Page 3 of

4160
MRN

unable, immediately, to bring situation under control. At appropriate moment moderates would begin to be successful, and GOA, having disposed of bulk of its opposition with limited damage to its image, would begin to build acceptable record in human rights area.

6. Israelis have studied situation with care to see if greater than normal Argentine anti-Semitism has emerged in security forces under new GOA. According to source, Jewish community has antennae vibrating at highest pitch, and every time Jew is arrested, or kidnapped by "non-official" forces, tendency is to see anti-Semitism on rise. Fact appears to be, however, that Jews suffering abuses are in rough proportion to their natural percentage among groups involved. Israeli Embassy recognizes, for example, that Jews are ~~being~~ heavily represented in academic and intellectual population which in turn is heavily involved in leftist subversive activities. It is not surprising or sinister to find fair number of Jews thus caught up in captures of real or suspected ERP or Montonero members. Israeli source assumes that rightist, traditionally anti-Semitic security forces personnel and possibly semi-official "death squads" are doubly pleased when subversive in their power turns out to be Jew as well, but emphasis is on subversive quality, not Jewishness as such. Israeli Embassy and Jewish leaders on whole consider that present GOA has not initiated or permitted more than "normal" anti-Semitism, to

Classification

UNCLASSIFIED

OPTIONAL FORM 153A
(Formerly FS-413A)
January 1975
Dept. of State

[date. They will of course follow these trends in future.]

7. Comment: Israeli theory concerning united GOA tactic with respect to violation of human rights is an interesting one and has been heard before. That Israelis believe it is significant in itself. Theory that Videla is simply pretending to be disturbed by violations of human rights is plausible, and, indeed, DAO is receiving indications from its sources which coincide to large degree with Israeli evaluation of GOA internal security policy. On other hand, it is also plausible that Videla and Viola would indeed like to bring abuses under control but do not have strength to do so without risking serious institutional splits--a risk they are not willing to take (see reftels). Embassy leans toward this view, but whatever the reason for Videla's inertia, results are the same. It is clear that elements of security forces are involved in illegal arrests, tortures and other violations of human rights. It is equally clear by this time that Videla must be aware of this involvement. Yet no rpt no measures that we are aware of have yet been taken to end it. Hence, Videla himself must bear the responsibility.

8. As time goes by it becomes apparent that while there are divisions, and possible serious ones, in the Armed Forces, those differences revolve more around questions of long-range political solutions (e.g., whether to dialogue with the present political parties or try to create new ones; whether

~~Classification~~
UNCLASSIFIED

to use the present CGT structure or wipe it out and produce totally new concepts and structures for trade union activity) and far less around questions of human rights. Controlling terrorism is govt's number one priority and avoidance of violations of human rights in the process may simply be too difficult and subtle for govt to handle.

9. As this cable being drafted, UNHCR representative approached us to ask our opinion on GOA attitude toward Jews. He has been hearing warnings from some sources including French Embassy that anti-Semitism on rise. However, French concern apparently based on limited number of cases in which persons arrested formally or kidnapped informally on essentially political suspicion have later reported that captors displayed vicious anti-Semitism in addition to interest in subversion. This tends to validate Israeli assessment of situation rather than to indicate specific increase in anti-Semitism on part of GOA.

~~SECRET~~

~~Classification~~

UNCLASSIFIED